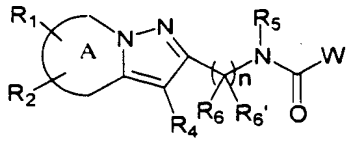
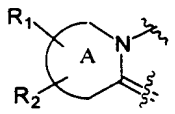
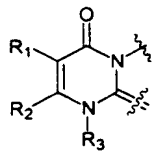
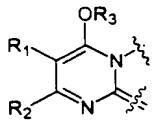
What is claimed is:

1. A compound of the formula



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein n is 1, 2, or 3;

 represents  or  ;

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy; or

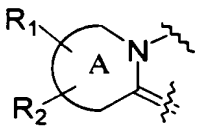
R_1 and R_2 together with the atoms with which they are attached form a partially saturated or unsaturated carbocyclic ring of from 3 to 8 carbon atoms, wherein the ring is optionally substituted by up to 5 substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

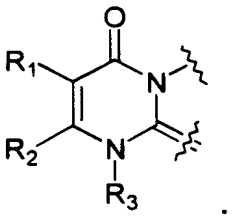
R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from hydrogen; C_1-C_6 acyl; and C_1-C_6 alkyl; wherein each C_1-C_6 acyl and C_1-C_6 alkyl is optionally substituted with up to three substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, halo(C_1-C_2)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_2)alkoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl, and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl, and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted with up to three groups independently selected from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino;

R_6 and R_6' are independently selected at each occurrence from hydrogen and C_1-C_6 alkyl;

W is aryl or heteroaryl, each of which is optionally substituted with up to 5 groups independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- or di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

2. A compound according to claim 1, wherein



represents


.

3. A compound according to claim 2, wherein W is optionally substituted heteroaryl.

4. A compound according to claim 3, wherein W is pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, pyridizinyl, pyrrolyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl or thiophenyl, each of which is optionally substituted with up to 5 groups independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- or di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

5. A compound according to claim 2, wherein W is optionally substituted aryl.

6. A compound according to claim 5, wherein W is phenyl optionally substituted with up to 5 groups independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- or di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

7. A compound according to claim 6, wherein

R_4 and R_5 are independently C_1-C_6 alkyl optionally substituted with 1 or 2 substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl, and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl, and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted with up to three groups independently selected from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino.

8. A compound according to claim 6, wherein

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy; and

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently C_1-C_6 alkyl.

9. A compound according to claim 6, wherein

R_1 and R_2 together with the atoms with which they are attached form a partially saturated or unsaturated carbocyclic ring of from 3 to 8 carbon atoms, wherein the ring is optionally substituted by up to 5 substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy; and

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently H or C_1-C_6 alkyl.

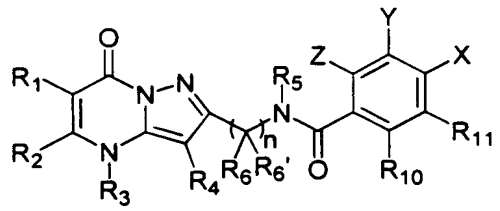
10. A compound according to claim 9, wherein

R_1 and R_2 together with the atoms with which they are attached form a cyclopentenyl, cyclopentadienyl, cyclohexenyl, cyclohexadienyl, cycloheptatrienyl, cycloheptadienyl, phenyl, cyclooctadienyl, and cyclooctenyl, wherein each ring is optionally substituted by up to 5 substituents

independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy; and

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently C_1-C_4 alkyl.

11. A compound of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein:

n is 1, 2, or 3;

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy; or

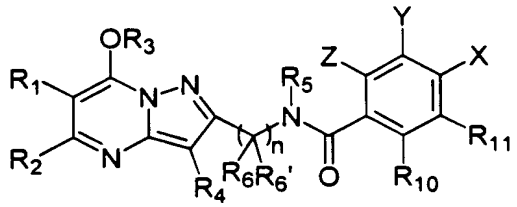
R_1 and R_2 together with the atoms with which they are attached form a partially saturated or unsaturated carbocyclic ring of from 3 to 8 carbon atoms, wherein the ring is optionally substituted by up to 5 substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from (i) hydrogen; and (ii) C_1-C_6 acyl and C_1-C_6 alkyl, optionally substituted with up to three substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, halo(C_1-C_2)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_2)alkoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted with up to three groups selected independently from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino;

R_6 and R_6' are independently selected at each occurrence from hydrogen and C_1-C_6 alkyl; and

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, Y and Z are independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

12. A compound of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein:

n is 1, 2, or 3;

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy, or

R_1 and R_2 together with the atoms with which they are attached form a partially saturated or unsaturated carbocyclic ring of from 3 to 8 carbon atoms, wherein the ring is optionally substituted by up to 5 substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

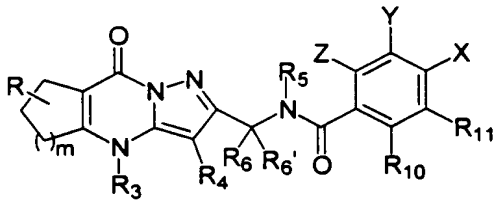
R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from (i) hydrogen; and (ii) C_1-C_6 acyl and C_1-C_6 alkyl, optionally substituted with up to three substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, halo(C_1-C_2)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_2)alkoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted

with up to three groups selected independently from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino;

R_6 and R_6' are independently selected at each occurrence from hydrogen and C_1-C_6 alkyl; and

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, Y and Z are independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, mono- and di(C_1-C_6)alkyl amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

13. A compound according to claim 8 of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein:

m is 1, 2, or 3;

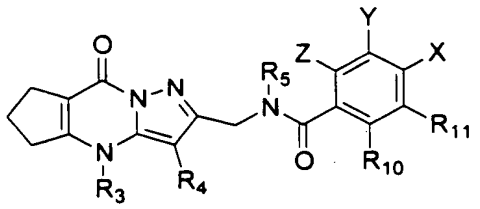
R represents up to 5 groups independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl, and C_1-C_6 alkoxy;

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from (i) hydrogen; and (ii) C_1-C_6 acyl and C_1-C_6 alkyl, optionally substituted with up to three substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, halo(C_1-C_2)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_2)alkoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted with up to three groups selected independently from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino;

R_6 and R_6' are independently chosen from hydrogen, methyl, and ethyl; and

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, Y and Z are independently selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

14. A compound according to claim 13 of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein:

R_3, R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from (i) hydrogen; and (ii) C_1-C_6 acyl and C_1-C_6 alkyl, optionally substituted with up to three substituents independently chosen from halogen, hydroxy, halo(C_1-C_2)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_2)alkoxy, methoxy, ethoxy, C_3-C_7 cycloalkyl, phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl, wherein each of phenyl, pyridyl and pyrimidyl is optionally substituted with up to three groups selected independently from halogen, C_1-C_6 alkyl, C_1-C_6 alkoxy, hydroxy and amino;

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, Y and Z are selected from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

15. A compound according to claim 14, wherein:

R_3 is hydrogen, methyl or ethyl;

R_4 and R_5 are independently C_2-C_6 alkyl; and

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, W, Y and Z are independently hydrogen, halogen or methyl.

16. A compound according to claim 11, wherein:

n is 1; and

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, amino, halo(C_1-C_6)alkyl, halo(C_1-C_6)alkoxy, C_1-C_6 alkyl and C_1-C_6 alkoxy.

17. A compound according to claim 16, wherein:

R_1, R_2, and R_3 are independently chosen from hydrogen, methyl, and ethyl;

R_4 and R_5 are independently chosen from C_2-C_6 alkyl and benzyl;

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, Y and Z are independently selected from hydrogen, halogen and methyl; and

R_6 and R_6' are both hydrogen.

18. A compound according to claim 11, wherein n is 1.

19. A compound according to claim 18, wherein:

R_1 and R_2 are independently chosen from hydrogen, methyl and ethyl;

R_3 is methyl or ethyl;

R_6 and R_6' are both hydrogen; and

R_{10}, R_{11}, X, W, Y and Z are independently chosen from hydrogen, halogen, methyl, and methoxy.

20. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5-methyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

21. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo [1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]- N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

22. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5-methyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

23. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

24. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

25. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4-ethyl-5-methyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

26. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-5,6-dimethyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

27. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4,5,6-trimethyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

28. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

29. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7a-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(ethylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

30. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7a-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-benzyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

31. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5,6-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7a-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

32. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-propyl-N-[(4,5,6-trimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo [1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl](3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

33. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-5-methyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

34. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

35. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(methylpropyl)(3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

36. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(ethylpropyl)(3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

37. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-benzyl(3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

38. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5,6-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

39. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-propyl-N-[(4,5,6-trimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo [1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl](3-chlorophenyl)carboxamide.

40. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5-methyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl) carboxamide.

41. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl) carboxamide.

42. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-ethyl-N-[(3-ethyl-5-methyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a] pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl](2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

43. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

44. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl) carboxamide.

45. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(ethylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

46. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4,5-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-benzyl(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

47. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(5,6-dimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

48. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-propyl-N-[(4,5,6-trimethyl-7-oxo-3-propyl(4,7-dihydropyrazolo [1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl](2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

49. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(7-methoxy-5-methyl-3-propyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

50. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(7-methoxy-5-methyl-3-propyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl)carboxamide.

51. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-7-methoxy-5-methyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

52. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-7-methoxy-5-methyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(3-chlorophenyl) carboxamide.

53. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(7-methoxy-5-methyl-3-propyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl) carboxamide.

54. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-7-methoxy-5-methyl(pyrazolo[1,5-a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-(2-methylpropyl)(2,5-difluorophenyl) carboxamide.

55. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(8-oxo-3-propyl(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

56. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(4-methyl-8-oxo-3-propyl(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

57. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

58. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4-methyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-fluorophenyl) carboxamide.

59. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-chlorophenyl) carboxamide.

60. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4-methyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(3-chlorophenyl) carboxamide.

61. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-

d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

62. A compound according to claim 1, which is N-[(3-ethyl-4-methyl-8-oxo(4,5,6,7,8a-pentahydrocyclopenta[2,1-d]pyrazolo[1,5a]pyrimidin-2-yl))methyl]-N-propyl(2,5-difluorophenyl)carboxamide.

63. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of claim 1 in combination with a physiologically acceptable carrier or excipient.

64. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 63 wherein the pharmaceutical composition is formulated as an injectable fluid, an aerosol, a cream, a gel, a pill, a capsule, a syrup, or a transdermal patch.

65. A method for the treatment of anxiety, depression, a sleep disorder, attention deficit disorder, or Alzheimer's dementia, comprising administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1.

66. A method for potentiating a therapeutic effect of a CNS agent, comprising administering to a patient a CNS agent and a compound of claim 1.

67. A method for determining the presence or absence of $GABA_A$ receptor in a sample, comprising:

(a) contacting a sample with a compound of claim 1 under conditions that permit binding of the compound to $GABA_A$ receptor; and

(b) detecting a level of compound bound to $GABA_A$ receptor, and therefrom determining the presence or absence of $GABA_A$ receptor in the sample.

68. A method according to claim 67, wherein the compound is radiolabeled, and wherein the step of detection comprises:

(i) separating unbound compound from bound compound; and

(ii) detecting the presence or absence of bound compound in the sample.

69. The method of claim 68 wherein the presence or absence of bound compound is detected using autoradiography.

70. A method for altering the signal-transducing activity of $GABA_A$ receptor, comprising contacting a cell expressing $GABA_A$ receptor with a compound of claim 1 in an amount sufficient to detectably alter the electrophysiology of the cell, and thereby altering $GABA_A$ receptor signal-transducing activity.

71. The method of claim 70 wherein the cell recombinantly expresses a heterologous $GABA_A$ receptor, and wherein the alteration of the electrophysiology of the cell is detected by intracellular recording or patch clamp recording.

72. The method of claim 70 wherein the cell is a neuronal cell that is contacted *in vivo* in an animal, the solution is a body fluid, and the alteration in the electrophysiology of the cell is detected as a change in the animal's behavior.

73. The method of claim 72 wherein the animal is a human, the cell is a brain cell, and the fluid is cerebrospinal fluid.

74. A packaged pharmaceutical composition comprising the pharmaceutical composition of Claim 63 in a container and instructions for using the composition to treat a patient suffering from anxiety, depression, a sleep disorder, attention deficit disorder, or Alzheimer's dementia.

75. A compound according to claim 1 wherein in an assay of $GABA_A$ receptor binding the compound exhibits an K_i of 1 micromolar or less.

76. A compound according to claim 1 wherein in an assay of $GABA_A$ receptor binding the compound exhibits an K_i of 100 nanomolar or less.

77. A compound according to claim 1 wherein in an assay of $GABA_A$ receptor binding the compound exhibits an K_i of 10 nanomolar or less.

78. The use of a compound according to claim 1 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of anxiety, depression, a sleep disorder, an attention deficit disorder, or Alzheimer's dementia.